Part II
Historical Approaches

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Historical Thinking as a Tool for Theoretical Psychology

On Objectivity

Thomas Teo

In this chapter, I discuss the relevance of *historical thinking* for theoretical and philosophical psychology. In particular, I am interested in how historical *thought styles* (Fleck 1979) can be used as tools for theoretical psychology. In the following reconstructions, five approaches of historical thinking that contribute to an understanding of psychological problems are discussed: *history of science*, *history of the present*, *history as reconstruction*, *history of the politics of difference*, and *historical psychology*. I use the concept of *objectivity* as an example to demonstrate the relevance of these approaches to theoretical psychology.

It should be mentioned that the relationship between the *history of psychology*, which may incorporate some of the above-mentioned *thought styles*, and the *theory of psychology,* is a complicated one (Teo 2013). The term *historical thinking* encompasses more approaches than the subdiscipline of the history of psychology. I suggest that temporality and professional histories are not sufficient to theoretical thinking in psychology and that professional history, as important as it is, is only one element in the discussion of temporality. Rather, I recommend that theoretical psychologists should include various historical *thought styles* in their endeavors as they were developed by historians as well as philosophers, social scientists, and psychologists, many of whom have engaged in critical approaches to the problem.

History of Science

Histories of science are sometimes presented by trained historians, but also by scientists-turned-historians. In this thought style, history has primacy but there are often theoretical implications that have major consequences for various

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academic disciplines. The historiography of science is critical in pointing to the historical nature of disciplines, institutions, theories, concepts, methods, ideas, associations, materials, instruments, and so on. For instance, seemingly straightforward practices such as "deception" in experimental psychology have complex social and cultural beginnings and trajectories (Pettit 2013).

One of the most influential, if not most prominent, classical study in the history of science (history of physics) was presented by Kuhn (1962), whose ideas have been debated widely in psychology. In *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Kuhn (1962) developed now widely used concepts such as *paradigm*, *normal science*, *scientific revolution*, and *incommensurability*. Kuhn's historical studies of physics have significant implications for the concept of objectivity: objectivity may be limited to a historically existent paradigm that is qualitatively different from a precursor or successor. Although there have been serious debates about whether psychology has reached paradigmatic status or is still preparadigmatic due to the existence of incompatible frameworks – a characterization that Kuhn used for the social sciences – it is evident that major systems in the history of the discipline apply different concepts of objectivity.

Objectivity in psychoanalysis differs from objectivity in behaviorism, Gestalt psychology, evolutionary psychology, phenomenological psychology, cognitive psychology, neuroscience, and so on. For example, a phenomenological concept of objectivity is incommensurable with a behaviorist one. Thus, when Giorgi (1990) demands that objectivity in psychology means to include subjectivity, mainstream researchers would not know what he is referring to or would reject his claim outright: objectivity is:

> not a matter of transforming subjectively based data into objective data, but precisely a way of grasping subjectivity as it expresses itself, that is, to grasp it in its subjectivity would indicate objectivity. (32)

Objectivity in psychology is neither transparadigmatic nor ahistorical, and it is unreasonable from a history of science perspective to assume a linear, continuous progression of objectivity in psychology from Johann F. Herbart (1776–1841) to brain science.

Kuhn (1962) did not target objectivity explicitly, although he defended a historically contingent understanding of objectivity (Kuhn 1989). Yet, objectivity has become a legitimate object of investigation in recent historical work. Daston and Galison (2007) wrote perhaps the most important book on the topic in the history of science. They distinguished four different types of objectivity that have prevailed, sometimes in succession, sometimes overlapping, and all of which are still used (for an application to a historical example in psychology, see Green 2010).

True-to-nature objectivity was endorsed by natural scientists of the 18th century. For instance, Carolus Linnaeus (1707–1778), as an experienced observer in

botany, and in selecting and attempting to idealize and synthesize the essential (and not accidental) features of a plant, was able to provide one kind of objectivity. The point of objectivity, under this construal, was to identify and visually represent ideal types that underlie variations found in nature. Art and science were intertwined because it was the task of artists, under the guidance of scientists, to represent idealtypic exemplars of plants, physical objects, animals, embryos, insects, human skeletons, and human body parts in, for instance, atlases. According to Daston and Galison (2007), conflicts arose when artists who were to draw essential features did not accept a subordinate role to scientists.

The role of the artist declined in *mechanical objectivity,* although *true-to-nature objectivity* continued into the 19th and 20th centuries (e.g., in botany). In mechanical objectivity, nature and untouched specimens were depicted through mechanical devices such as the microscopic and other forms of scientific photography (and later through electroencephalography, X-rays, and magnetic resonance imaging). It was assumed that machines removed subjectivity, understood as the way of seeing or the willful interpretation of the naturalist or artist. Yet, as Daston and Galison (2007) point out, mechanical objectivity was never truly realized, although it guided the self-understanding of scientists by the late 19th century when "machines offered freedom from will" (123). For instance, in psychology it had been suggested that the seemingly mechanical administration of culture-fair IQ tests would be objective, when in fact the tests themselves were (and continue to be) laden with cultural assumptions (see for example, Greenfield 1997).

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, another form of objectivity, *structural objectivity*, emerged. Beyond visible images, it was assumed in the disciplines of logic, mathematics, philosophy, and physics that the point of objective scientific work was not to identify visible surface phenomena, but rather, to detect invariant functional or relational structures (see, for example, the academic works of Max Planck, Gottlob Frege, and Bertrand Russell). Structural objectivity went beyond mechanical objectivity in that it abandoned not only art but visual representation altogether. Thus, structural objectivity is objectivity beyond the senses because beyond the observable facts were "final invariants of experience" (Daston and Gallison 2007, 260). It should be mentioned that similar to representatives of mechanical objectivity, proponents of structural objectivity detested subjectivity and saw it as an epistemological threat. The objective representation of structural invariants in psychology can be found in the works of Piaget (e.g., Inhelder and Piaget 1958).

Increasingly, 20th-century scientists realized that any objective mechanical image was accompanied implicitly or explicitly by a *trained judgment* provided by experts. In this fourth form of objectivity, scientists accepted the notion of a "judgment-inflected vision" (Daston and Galison 2007, 311) and assumed that no mechanical or automatic translation from object to paper exists. Yet, scientists who implicitly or explicitly promoted trained judgment did not abandon machines, but realized that EEGs, X-ray images, and so on required the trained eye that

transformed judgment into a scientific art. The expertise had to be acquired through apprenticeship, and through a "training of the eye, which drew on a historically specific way of seeing" (Daston and Galison 2007, 331).

What can be learned from this historical study on objectivity? First, objectivity in the natural sciences has a temporality, and what appears as inherently objective at one point in time might not hold true for another. Second, in an earlier publication, Daston and Gallison (1992) pointed to the ethical meaning of objectivity:

> How could it be that the very objectivity that seemed to insulate science from the moral – the creed that takes the fact/value distinction as its motto – simultaneously lay claim to moral dignity of the highest order? (122)

Third, psychology still embraces rhetorically mechanical objectivity, even when important researchers such as Piaget made attempts at structural objectivity. In addition, the importance of trained judgment in a human science such as psychology is significantly undervalued. This can be seen clearly in the gap between data and discussion in empirical articles (see Teo 2011). Fourth, although neuroscience in psychology promises a form of objectivity that traditional psychology could never claim, its objectivity depends on trained judgment as well. Daston and Galison (2007) call it "an act of cultivated perception and cognition" (331) – a judgment that is determined not only by the object or event but also by the subject. Subjectivity cannot be eliminated because "objectivity and subjectivity no longer appeared like opposite poles" (Daston and Galison 2007, 361). Indeed, psychology appears to lack an understanding of how much of trained judgment and its concepts of objectivity involve *traditions* (Gadamer 1997).

History of the Present

Historians of psychology distinguish between an old and a new history (Furumoto 1989). The new history, emerging around the 1970s, challenged the "presentism" (Stocking 1965) of the old psychology. Presentism refers to an understanding of the past from the perspective of the present, which is not only a credo for old historians but spontaneously assumed by most traditional psychologists. New historians call for an understanding of the past from the perspective of the past. Most psychologists endorse a presentist concept of objectivity based on the assumption that a current or dominant scientific program is also the most objective one. But linear historical thinking is confronted with one major problem: if something was deemed objective in the past and is now considered not objective enough, it is at least conceivable, if not likely, that our current understanding will be accused of a lack of objectivity at some future time.

The concept of objectivity is often treated and understood in the discipline of psychology as involving a linear, progressive, and cumulative conception of

scientific development, based on the assumption that the latest development is the best one. Continuity in the sciences was challenged by Kuhn (1962), in the human sciences by Foucault (1972), in psychology by Piaget (Inhelder and Piaget 1958), and for objectivity by Daston and Galison (2007). Objectivity has not followed a linear, progressive, or continuous path. The assumption of a transhistorical concept and practice of objectivity appears problematic and, from a critical point of view, the claim of objectivity in one's own research appears as a rhetorical tool to justify the status quo or a preconceived agenda (Teo 2011).

Rather than using history for celebratory purposes, history has a critical function that does not involve working on the past in order to celebrate the present, but in order to understand the present and to show the past that led to the present (but could have led to a different present). "History of the present" is a phrase that Foucault (1977) used in referring to an approach that attempts to understand the present, not by recreating a past from the perspective of the present, but instead, by reconstructing the elements, processes, decisions, and so on that led to the present. Foucault's project is *archeological* when he identifies the basic historical foundations that made certain discourses possible and it is *genealogical* when he understands the connections among these discourses and practices as shaped against a background of historical forms of power.

New historians of psychology have considered discontinuity and argue that for the study of a person, object, process, concept, method, or institution, psychologists need to include the socio-historical context, the development of ideas in other disciplines, and the need for doing archival work, which is mandated by historiography. To play on the concept of objectivity: one could argue that psychologists obtain a "more objective" understanding of objectivity in psychology when they look at the cultural, social, and political contexts in which this term was developed as well as at the meanings of this concept in other disciplines. Thus, the new history is critical of a transhistorical definition of concepts, their commonsense assumptions, and the rhetoric of celebration of any given understanding of objectivity. New historians also point to the idea that the history of objectivity in psychology as an academic discipline is different from the history of objectivity in psychology as a field of interest shared by various disciplines including psychoanalysis, anthropology, sociology, and history (see also Richards 1996).

Danziger (1997) has provided some of the most important historical analyses of psychological concepts while developing a history with theoretical import. Rather than following the assumption that a current (operational) definition is the best possible definition of a psychological category, he developed a history of concepts as we accept them today (e.g., personality, IQ, motivation). He showed that psychological concepts and theories have births and undergo transformations (see Chapter 10). Because psychological concepts have a history, a transhistorical and transcultural objective definition of a concept is impossible – including the concept of objectivity itself. Operational definitions do not provide an objective definition, but rather, avoid the problem altogether

and may lead to an inflation of definitions of a concept (e.g., the self), consensually agreed upon demarcations (e.g., persistent complex bereavement disorder), or measurement-based tautological definitions (e.g., intelligence is what intelligence tests measure).

Whereas Danziger's work on concepts can be understood as archeological, his works on Wundt can be characterized as genealogical (Danziger 1990). He demonstrated that the discipline that claims Wilhelm Wundt as its founder has misrepresented its history and ignored Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie,* his nonexperimental cultural psychology. By excluding the dualistic foundation (experimental psychology and cultural psychology) that Wundt had in mind, psychologists not only have neglected important aspects of human mental life, but also have needed to rewrite history in a way that serves the status quo. Again, one could argue that the "positivist" reinterpretation of Wundt's oeuvre provided a less objective account of what psychology is about. Danziger (1990) also showed that the relationship between subject and object in psychology (e.g., experimenter and participant) is not a natural one, but again, the result of historical, cultural, and political processes. The assumption that a detached relationship between researcher and participant is the best possible condition for objectivity is historically and culturally contingent (see also Morawski 2000).

The Nietzsche-Foucault-Rose-Hacking-Danziger tradition that I would like to claim for this type of historical thinking (thought style) emphasizes history and theory as equally important. Yet, none of the important figures exemplifying this thought style is a professional historian. The concept of *genealogy* goes back to Friedrich Nietzsche's (2006) critique of morality in which he suggested that morality had a history and that this history was related to power structures. In the same essay, he challenged the notion of objectivity and the notion of an ahistorical subject, and argued that including various perspectives on an object would provide more objectivity. Foucault was influenced by this argument in his genealogy of human knowledge, which led him to the conclusion that the truth of an object is embedded in power and that objectivity and power belong together.

Rose (1996), who applied Foucault's perspective to a genealogy of subjectivity, suggested that the psy-disciplines (i.e., disciplines bearing the prefix "psy") have created new forms of experience in which humans subjectify themselves and whereby psychology has become an individualizing technology. If this is the case, then objectivity assumes a very different meaning in psychology. Psychology would need to trace the history of psychologization and subjectification in order to be objective. In other words, psychology would need to take looping effects (Hacking 1994; see Chapters 10 and 11) of psychological categories into account, undermining simple ontological definitions of objectivity. Hacking (1995) showed convincingly the social construction of mental illness and the consequences of looping effects that psychological concepts evoke. A concept of objectivity would need to include such looping effects, which would make psychological studies

significantly more complicated, but also more "objective" in the sense of *strong objectivity* (Harding 1991, 1993).

Foucault (1997) also suggested looking at the history of problematization, the way in which theories and practices have become problems for politics. One can argue that psychology and the human sciences have contributed to making people into problems. Whereas some traditional psychologists believe that psychology is about problem solving, one finds ample evidence that psychology is equally about problem making. A seemingly objective study that uses good measures, good samples, and good statistical methods can still contribute to making people into problems by not taking the historical and social context of a question into account (Teo 2004). In order to make individuals or groups into problems (traditionally along lines drawn according to "race," gender, class, ability, sexual orientation, etc.), one can employ theoretical tools and construct new concepts or one can use empirical methods for making people into problems, such as when one repeats the same study on samples that already have been constructed socially as problematic.

To illustrate the point of making people into problems, I have used the example of mixed race (Teo 2004). If a difference has been considered significant in the past, and social divisions enacted based on the difference, then empirical studies will only mirror what has been socially constituted beforehand. The question then arises regarding the ways psychology lacks objectivity by not taking history into account and by creating psychological and social realities. Studies that then find differences between groups simply support a preconceived problematization rather than challenge it. Objectivity takes place in a context and includes the question of relevance. What is the relevance of the difference between large-eared and small-eared groups of people and the relevance of group differences in IQ tests? What is deemed relevant is itself a social or historical achievement that needs to be included in studies that aim at strong objectivity (Harding 1993; see below).

Science frequently serves to reinforce the ways individuals and groups in marginalized positions are constructed as social problems. The question remains as to whether a study that contributes to making people into problems through empirical methods, even if the methods are objective, should be considered objective if it does not take into account the problems that those individuals or groups encounter in a given society. Perhaps it is not marginalized individuals and groups in a society, but rather, empirical methods that are not contextualized and historicized that are the problem. Historical examples of looking "objectively" at gender or "race" differences make this point obvious (for example, the idea, based on historical empirical studies, that southern Europeans are intellectually inferior to northern Europeans). "Histories of the present" studies show that the concept of objectivity needs to be connected to the issue of relevance, which has a moral, political, social, and historical trajectory.

History as Reconstruction

Marx and Engels (1958) once stated that they accept only one science, the science of history, which can be divided into the history of nature and the history of humans. This stream of historical thinking led to the *Marx-critical theory-German critical psychology* tradition. For all thinkers in this tradition, history and historical thinking were extremely important, but they all developed theoretical work. They reconstructed theories from the perspective of present concerns using historical thinking and historical reconstruction (under the primacy of theory). The thinkers in this thought style showed less connection to professional historiography than histories of science or histories of the present.

Philosophical interests guided the historical reconstructions in this framework. Marx's (1985) fourth volume of *Das Kapital* was not published during his lifetime, and the importance of the extensive critical-historical reconstructions of surplus value (from James Steuart and Adam Smith to Thomas Malthus and Thomas Hodgskin) is disputed as being either a means for theoretical arguments or original contributions in and of themselves. The question is whether historical work can be misused for theoretical and political work, or whether historical work enhances the theoretical argument. In any case, Marx believed in the centrality of historical reconstructions for theory development and that they would allow for a more comprehensive understanding, and more objectivity, than a purely theoretical stance.

Critical theory of the Frankfurt School took a similar stance towards history. Horkheimer (1992) proclaimed in his programmatic text on critical theory that:

> the facts which our senses present to us are socially performed in two ways: through the historical character of the object perceived and through the historical character of the perceiving organ. (242)

He suggested that neither object nor our organs are just naturally there, but are shaped through human activities that are social, historical, and cultural. Consequently, in order to be objective towards the object psychologists need to include both sides of this reality, i.e., the historical nature of psychological objects and events and the historically contingent ways of looking at them.

In the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Horkheimer and Adorno (1982) looked at the historical trajectory of enlightened reason and criticized epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics as they developed in modernity. A reconstruction of the dialectic of enlightenment showed that myth was already a form of enlightenment (not accepting an event as given but trying to explain it within the means of mythology) and that enlightenment fell back into myth. For instance, positivism as a target for their epistemological critique suggested an empiricist and mathematical approach to the social sciences. This was originally a form of enlightenment that superseded pure speculation; but it fell back into mythology by restricting social science to this approach.

In psychology the experimental, statistical-analytical approach fell back into a new form of mythology when it excluded important questions and problems and neglected the embeddedness of mental life as well as its sciences in a variety of contexts. Bakan (1967) aptly called it *methodolatry*. Statistical analyses of group differences, whereby the groups are historically constituted, questions are historically constructed, and instruments are historically created, fall back into myth if they do not take the historical constitution of all the elements in the research process into account. Without this understanding, technical objectivity turns into its opposite and reverts back to myth. Thus, in the empirical study of race differences, technical objectivity is insufficient to challenge false ideas (Teo 2011). Objectivity itself has become a myth when it is detached from history, politics, and from values.

Another example of applying historical reconstruction to theoretical problems has been provided by Habermas (1972). Using historical reconstructions, Habermas famously divided knowledge into three independent forms of interest that guide differing types of basic knowledge. Empirical-analytic sciences are guided by a technical and instrumental interest; historical-hermeneutic sciences are guided by a practical interest; and critical sciences are guided by an emancipatory, reflexive interest. If differing types of basic knowledge interests can be found in our natural and human history, then it does not make sense to colonize all sciences through the demands of the empirical-analytic and technical sciences. Similarly, the concept of objectivity in the empirical-analytic sciences, which has undergone historical changes, cannot simply be exported to other sciences that have their own standards of objectivity. Moreover, as Habermas has suggested, the concept of objectivity in the empirical-analytic sciences hides the interests as well as the life-world realities that constitute its very meaning. In psychology, the concept of objectivity has undergone a technical reinterpretation, which also means that it neglects the meaning of objectivity in other forms of knowledge and, in the process, objectivity has suffered (e.g., in not addressing what constitutes a "good" interpretation in psychology).

Marx also had an influence on the cultural-historical approach in psychology. But, for my current purposes, I will focus on German critical psychology (e.g., Holzkamp 1983). In *Laying the Foundation for Psycholo*gy, Holzkamp (1983) attempted a natural and historical reconstruction of the psyche. He called it a *functional-historical* method that followed the origins, differentiations, and qualifications of the development of the psyche. For example, he reconstructed a societal nature of human beings (human nature is inherently societal), which means that the conceptual opposition between society and individual, culture and nature, and nurture and nature is misleading.

On the human, societal level of psychological competencies, Holzkamp identified agency as central to human subjectivity. Accordingly, agency meant that humans have the freedom to control their conditions through participating in the societal process. But historical analyses also have consequences for the concept of

objectivity in psychology. If subjectivity is a uniquely human feature that has evolved through natural selection and societal development, then objectivity in psychology cannot exclude subjectivity. On the contrary, objectivity in psychology entails subjectivity and its unique features (Holzkamp 1985). Objectivity also requires an understanding that subjectivity takes place as persons conduct their everyday lives within particular, historically evolved societies.

In traditions of historical reconstruction, objectivity is also understood by considering the background of ideology (understood as biased consciousness), based on one's own position and interests in society. Marx and Engels (1958) suggested that any truth claim, or any claim to objectivity, needs to be reconstructed on the basis of the social class to which the "knower" belongs. They believed that the social sciences of their time produced knowledge (for instance, economic theories) that furthered the interests and goals of the economic elites. In that sense, political-economic works were not objective, but rather, biased. Marx and Engels established the idea that social categories contribute to biases in knowledge production and what it means to be objective.

The idea of a socially biased ideology, that one's own class influences one's own social theories, and that the dominant theories are the theories of dominant groups in society, has an impact on the concept of objectivity in the social sciences: Objectivity is socially situated. Later, proponents of social epistemologies would extend that bias from class and economic interest to gender, culture, and other categories on which social oppression is based, as discussed in the next section. It should be pointed out that the Foucauldian tradition is in conflict with this thought style, because Foucault did not accept the classical notion of ideology. Poststructuralists and postmodernists believe that everyone is caught in perspectivity and that no privileged standpoint exists.

History of the Politics of Difference

The *politics of difference* tradition looks at gender, race, disability, sexual preferences, colonialism, and so on from a critical-historical point of view while providing counter-concepts (including objectivity). This thought style gives primacy to theory (when a proponent is not trained as a professional historian), or primacy to history with a theoretical relevance (when the proponent emerges from the discipline of history, e.g., Chakrabarty 2000). For instance, the now classic work by Evelyn Fox Keller (1985) was based on historical reconstructions from Plato to modernity. Analyzing the metaphors used by Francis Bacon, Keller concluded that the scientific mind, as it was constituted historically, was based on ideas of masculinity, virility, and sexual aggression that not only institutionally, but also conceptually excluded women from science.

For Keller (1985), the connection between science and gender was consequential for the concept of objectivity. The dominant concept of objectivity in the

natural sciences – a static form of objectivity that severs the object from the subject – has a masculine bias as it connects objectivity with power. As a counter-concept, she proposed the term *dynamic objectivity* based on connectivity and empathy in the process of knowledge making, feelings, understanding, and experience, as well as subjectivity. Dynamic objectivity uses subjectivity in order to become more objective. The Nobel laureate Barbara McClintock was proposed by Keller as an exemplar of dynamic objectivity in not detaching the object (plants) from the researcher but in showing affection, kinship and empathy, and in preferring understanding and empowerment over prediction and manipulation. Using a psychoanalytic framework, Keller believed at the time that the historically constituted different socializations of girls and boys led to the acceptance of different forms of objectivity.

A concept similar to dynamic objectivity was proposed by the philosopher of science, Sandra Harding (1991). Her counter-concept of *strong objectivity* is based less on historical thinking than philosophical reflection. Strong objectivity includes an analysis of background beliefs that shape research and a combination of the micro as well as macro aspects of (social) reality. By including the standpoint, voice, and perspective of the marginalized, social science can achieve more objectivity than by just ignoring their voices. Strong objectivity means including the standpoint of the knowing subject because scientific ideas are socially and historically situated.

In feminism, strong objectivity begins with women's lives and including women's lives in research leads not to less but more objectivity. An example in psychology of thinking from the situated lives of women comes from Gilligan (1982), who raised the questions of what kind of theory of morality and what kind of objective representation of morality we get when we focus on male subjects, on a morality of justice (as opposed to an ethics of care), and on moral judgment (as opposed to moral feelings or moral behavior). A strong objectivity of morality would include the history and culture of gendered lives and their impact on psychological theory (see Chapter 24). The problem of situated knowledge can be extended to other marginalized groups in history based on ethnicity, culture, disability, sexual preference, age, and so on. From the perspective of feminist standpoint theory, including such different voices would increase, not decrease, objectivity.

The historian Chakrabarty (2000) addressed such epistemological issues from the perspective of a professional historian. He looked at the impact of colonialism from a critical-historical point of view. He challenged the assumption that European history is world history and described the asymmetrical difficulty that an academic from the periphery is still required to refer to Europe but not vice versa. In terms of objectivity, one can ask how objective a world history can be when it focuses only on Europe or North America. Would an objective world history not require including histories from the periphery?

In psychology, we find the situation where American psychology as the dominant thought collective colonizes all other psychologies. But this situation also

means that objectivity has a Western bias and that the export of American psychologies to the rest of the world does not solve that problem. Instead of selling Western ideas to the rest of the world, globalization should be about accommodating and assimilating non-Western ideas from around the world. Only such an inclusive globalization will lead to an objectivity that is less culturally and contextually constrained. Following Chakrabarty, one could argue that American psychology, and its concepts of objectivity, needs provincializing as well. This would mean understanding American psychology as simply one culturally and historically embedded form of psychology, among other forms. This implicit or explicit provincializing of Western psychology has led to various movements of indigenous psychology with relevance for theoretical psychology (Allwood and Berry 2006).

We have argued (see Teo and Febbraro 2003) that from an epistemological point of view it is impossible to catapult ourselves outside our own traditions. Historical objectivity may be possible within each culture, but greater objectivity could be achieved if we were to take into account thought styles from outside our own tradition, and when we widen our horizons (Gadamer 1997) for psychological intuitions and categories from outside the West (if we come from the West). But our form of intuition is not only culture-centric – it is also time-centric. We do not relativize our own intuitions and categories historically. This relativization has been attempted in the next approach to historical thinking.

Historical Psychology

Finally, I briefly mention the project of a *historical psychology* that uses history in order to understand psychological subject matter as inherently temporal. The project is genuinely psychological as the goal is a better understanding of human subjectivity (Sonntag und Jüttemann 1993). Jüttemann (2011) claimed Wilhelm Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* as a source for historical psychology. He tried to reconstruct the historicity of the psyche based on the assumption that humans are different from other animals and that psychologists need to focus on historical changes of language, social systems, weapons, manufacturing, food organization and preparation, economy and law, culture and religion, art and entertainment, and so on, in order to understand current mental life.

Following insights from philosophical anthropology, Jüttemann examined basic elements for a historical psychology. For example, he identified a self-deception phenomenon in which humans are not aware of their own process of historical socialization or enculturation (i.e., we take them for granted). Thus, we experience our own development as quasi-natural and see ourselves as the origins of this development. He also suggested that a historical psychology needed to study the question of how the discipline of psychology influenced the development of persons (see also the history of the present section above).

Jüttemann (2011) accused traditional psychology of being reductionistic, meaning that it misses its subject matter and thus lacks objectivity. As a counter-strategy, psychological analyses need to begin with ontological questions, including the question of what it means to be human. For Jüttemann, humans are always historical, and neglecting this dimension is missing the target. Objectivity in psychology demands the inclusion of this historicity of human mental life, and any approach that does not include temporality remains objectively limited. In Jüttemann's (1992) view, psychology is concerned with developing research that does justice to the subject matter, which is historically embedded subjectivity.

One can make the argument that similar ideas have been proposed by German critical psychology or by the cultural-historical school (e.g., Vygotsky 1978). All these approaches share the notion that subjectivity takes place in the world. But while historical psychology gives primacy to the concept of *history*, German critical psychology gives primacy to the concept of *society* as does the cultural-historical school. Society is understood as problematic because it is organized along powerful and powerless groups. Indigenous psychologies give primacy to the term *culture*. Conflicts and misunderstandings emerge from diverging usages of these terms.

Conclusion

Historical studies have shown that the concept of objectivity not only has temporality, but also that it relates to various philosophical subdisciplines: (a) objectivity has an ontological standing when it refers to something that is real, an object independent of our mind; (b) traditional objectivity has an epistemological meaning in the sense that a statement about an object (or event) mirrors the object and not the subject; traditional epistemological rules require that subjectivity must be excluded or, if that is impossible, minimized (psychology has developed various techniques to accomplish this); (c) objectivity has an ethical connotation when it is demanded that research *should* do *justice* to objects (and events) without personal or social biases, that one takes on an ascetic attitude, or that objectivity is a virtue.

Mainstream psychology assumes that objectivity is achieved when accepted methods are applied and when one follows the correct procedures, uses reliable and valid measures, and so on. But historical thinking shows that objectivity is more complex than simply applying a methodology or method predominant at a certain point of time. The epistemological assumption that objectivity in psychology means the exclusion or minimization of subjectivity is countered in various critical approaches, based on historical knowledge that the inclusion of subjectivity in psychology may set the condition for the possibility of greater ontic objectivity. Objectivity has a temporality, a culture, and a society as the foregoing historical arguments have demonstrated. In my own view, objectivity remains a *virtue* of

academic work, despite the complexities and impossibilities of its full realization – just not the narrow objectivity demanded by mainstream psychology.

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